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Attorney Docket RSW920000124US1  
Serial No. 09/912,570

OFFICIAL AMENDMENT

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of configuring a load balancer for dispatching client requests amongst a plurality of servers, said method comprising:

~~for each one of said plurality of servers, storing in a local memory a configuration file created by a server manufacturer~~ storing a configuration file in a local memory of each one of said plurality of servers, each of said configuration files containing parameters including content-based rules-variables pertaining to said server to be applied for configuring a load balancing scheme for said plurality of servers; a plurality of servers that include said server, and wherein each of said configuration files is accessible to said load balancer;

~~obtaining said parameters from said configuration file for~~ said configuration files from each of said plurality of servers; and

~~configuring said load balancer to dispatch client requests to said among said plurality of servers based on an algorithm using said parameters~~ a load balancing algorithm defined by said parameters including said variables obtained from said configuration files.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein each of said configuration files has a file path and name in accordance with a standard file path and naming protocol.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 3~~ claim 1 wherein said parameters provided in at least one of said configuration files comprises ~~comprise at least a health URL and content-based routing rules.~~

5. (Original) The method of claim 4 whercin said content-based routing rules comprise a URL mask.

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6. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 3~~ claim 1 wherein said parameters of at least one configuration file ~~further~~ comprise at least one of time-of-day rules, session affinity rules, cookie affinity rules, server health information and a link to said server health information.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said plurality of servers comprise a server farm coupled to receive client requests via the Internet.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said configuration files are file ~~are HTML files stored in one of an HTML or XML file format.~~

10. (Currently Amended) A computer readable product embodied on computer readable media readable by a computing device for configuring a scheme for balancing the servicing of client requests among a plurality of servers, said computer readable product comprising:

~~computer readable program code configured to obtain from a configuration file created by a server manufacturer~~ a configuration file from each of said plurality of servers, each of said configuration files stored in a local memory of its corresponding one of said plurality of servers and containing parameters including variables said server to be applied for configuring a load balancing scheme for said plurality of servers; stored locally at each of said servers, parameters pertaining to said server relevant to configuring a load balancing scheme for a plurality of servers, including each said server; said parameters comprising content-based rules; and

computer readable program code configured to configure said load balancer to dispatch client requests among said plurality of servers based on an algorithm using said parameters;  
a load balancing algorithm defined by said parameters including said variables obtained from said configuration files.

11. (Original) The product of claim 10 wherein each of said configuration files has a file path and name in accordance with a standard file path and naming protocol.

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12. (Currently Amended) A computing apparatus for performing load balancing of client requests among a plurality of servers, said apparatus comprising:

means for interfacing to a network to receive client requests directed to one of said plurality of servers via said network;

~~means for obtaining from a configuration file created by a server manufacturer, stored locally at each of said servers, parameters pertaining to said server relevant to configuring a load balancing scheme for a plurality of servers, including each said server; said parameters comprising content-based rules; a configuration file from each of said plurality of servers, each of said configuration files stored in a local memory of its corresponding one of said plurality of servers and containing parameters including variables said server to be applied for configuring a load balancing scheme for said plurality of servers;~~

~~means for configuring said load balancer to dispatch client requests to said servers based on an algorithm using said parameters; among said plurality of servers based on a load balancing algorithm defined by said parameters including said variables obtained from said configuration files; and~~

means for dispatching requests received via said network to said plurality of servers in accordance with said algorithm.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein configuring said load balancer comprises: initializing the load balancer by manually inputting the address information of each one of said plurality of servers; polling each one of said plurality of servers for said configuration file pertaining to each of said servers; validating each of said configuration files; and configuring the load balancing algorithm based on said parameters in said configuration files.

15. (Canceled)

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16. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein said storing a configuration file in a local memory of each one of said plurality of servers, each of said configuration files containing parameters including variables to be applied for configuring a load balancing scheme for said plurality of servers comprises: storing configuration files provided by a server manufacturer.

17. (New) The product of claim 10 wherein said parameters provided in at least one of said configuration files comprises content-based routing rules.

18. (New) The product of claim 10 wherein said parameters of at least one configuration file comprise at least one of time-of-day rules, session affinity rules, cookie affinity rules, server health information and a link to said server health information.

19. (New) The product of claim 10 further comprising:  
computer readable program code configured to initialize the load balancer by reading manually inputted address information of each one of said plurality of servers;  
computer readable program code configured to poll each one of said plurality of servers for said configuration file pertaining to each of said servers; and  
computer readable program code configured to validate each of said configuration files for configuring said load balancer to dispatch client requests among said plurality of servers.

20. (New) The product of claim 1 wherein said computer readable program code configured to obtain a configuration file from each of said plurality of servers comprises:  
computer readable program code configured to obtain configuration files provided by a server manufacturer.

21. (New) The computing apparatus of claim 12 wherein said means for obtaining a configuration file from each of said plurality of servers comprises means for obtaining each said configuration file based upon a file path and name in accordance with a standard file path and naming protocol.

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22. (New) The computing apparatus of claim 12 wherein said parameters provided in at least one of said configuration files comprises content-based routing rules.

23. (New) The computing apparatus of claim 12, wherein said means for configuring said load balancer to dispatch client requests among said plurality of servers based on a load balancing algorithm defined by said parameters including said variables obtained from said configuration files further comprises:

means to initialize the load balancer based upon manually inputted address information of each one of said plurality of servers;

means to poll each one of said plurality of servers for said configuration file pertaining to each of said servers; and

means to validate each of said configuration files for configuring said load balancer to dispatch client requests among said plurality of servers.

24. (New) The computing apparatus of claim 12 wherein said configuration files are provided by a server manufacturer.